

# Western Civilization

A Brief History



Volume I  
To 1789

Third Edition

Perry

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VOLUME I: TO 1789

# *Western Civilization*

A Brief History

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THIRD EDITION

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## ❖ Preface

Western civilization is a grand but tragic drama. The West has forged the instruments of reason that make possible a rational comprehension of physical nature and human culture, conceived the idea of political liberty, and recognized the intrinsic worth of the individual. But the modern West, though it has unravelled nature's mysteries, has been less successful at finding rational solutions to social ills and conflicts between nations. Science, a great achievement of the Western intellect, while improving conditions of life, has also produced weapons of mass destruction. Though the West has pioneered in the protection of human rights, it has also produced totalitarian regimes that have trampled on individual freedom and human dignity. And although the West has demonstrated a commitment to human equality, it has also practiced brutal racism.

*Western Civilization: A Brief History*, Third Edition, is an abridged version of *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics, and Society*, Fifth Edition. Like the longer text, this volume examines the Western tradition—those unique patterns of thought and systems of values that constitute the Western heritage. While focusing on key ideas and broad themes, the text also provides economic, political, and social history for students in Western civilization courses.

The text is written with the conviction that history is not a meaningless tale. Without a knowledge of history, men and women cannot fully know themselves, for all human beings have been shaped by institutions and values inherited from the past. Without an awareness of the historical evolution of reason and freedom, the dominant ideals of Western civilization, commitment to these ideals will diminish. Without a knowledge of history, the West cannot fully comprehend or adequately cope with the problems that burden its civilization and the world.

In attempting to make sense out of the past, the author has been careful to avoid superficial generalizations that oversimplify historical events and forces and arrange history into too neat a structure. But the text does strive to interpret and synthesize in order to provide students with a frame of reference with which to comprehend the principal events and eras in Western history.

### Changes in the Third Edition

For the third edition, most chapters have been reworked to some extent. The numerous carefully selected modifications and additions

significantly enhance the text. Some changes deepen the book's conceptual character; others provide useful and illustrative historical details. The concluding essays in several chapters have been enlarged and improved. Several chapters treating intellectual history have been expanded, and the art essays have been reorganized.

Specific changes include a revised concluding essay, "The Religious Orientation of the Ancient Near East," in Chapter 1, "The Ancient Near East." A concluding essay, "The Legacy of the Ancient Jews," has been added to Chapter 2, "The Hebrews." In Chapter 3, "The Greeks," we have illuminated more fully the genius of Homer, Thucydides, and Euripides. Chapter 4, "Rome," contains some new material on Cicero, slavery, and Roman imperialism. The discussions of Jesus and Paul have been enriched in Chapter 5, "Early Christianity." Some additional information on town life and Jewish-Christian relations has been incorporated into Chapter 6, "The Rise of Europe." The concluding essay has been reworked in Chapter 7, "The Flowering and Dissolution of Medieval Civilization." A separate section on slavery has been added to Chapter 9, "Political and Economic Transformation." Chapter 10, "Intellectual Transformation," has been completely rewritten.

In recent years, historians have rethought the question: Was the French Revolution a bourgeois revolution? In Chapter 11, "The Era of the French Revolution," we have expanded the discussion of this issue. The relationship between romanticism and nationalism has been more carefully delineated in Chapter 12, "Thought and Culture in the Early Nineteenth Century." A new section, "Feminism: Extending the Principle of Equality," has been added to Chapter 15, "Thought and Culture in the Mid-Nineteenth Century." The treatment of irrationalism has been enlarged in Chapter 17, "Modern Consciousness." In Chapter 18, "World War I," the concluding essay, "The War and European Consciousness," has been expanded and deepened. The discussion of the Holocaust has been expanded in Chapter 21, "World War II." The concluding chapter, "The West in a Global Age," has been significantly restructured and brought up to date.

## Distinctive Features

This brief edition was prepared for Western Civilization courses that run for one term only, for instructors who like to supplement the main text with primary source readers, novels, or monographs, and for humanities courses in which additional works on literature and art will be assigned. In abbreviating the longer text by about a third, the number of chapters has been reduced from 35 to 22. The empha-

sis on the history of ideas and culture has been retained, but the amount of detail has of necessity been reduced.

The text contains several pedagogical features. Chapter introductions provide comprehensive overviews of key themes and give a sense of direction and coherence to the flow of history. Chronologies at the beginning of most chapters show the sequence of important events discussed in the chapter. Many chapters contain concluding essays that treat the larger meaning of the material. Facts have been carefully selected to illustrate key relationships and concepts and to avoid overwhelming students with unrelated and disconnected data. Each chapter concludes with an annotated bibliography and review questions. The questions refer students to principal points and aim at eliciting thoughtful answers.

This text is published in both single-volume and two-volume editions. Volume I treats the period from the first civilizations in the Near East through the age of Enlightenment in the eighteenth century (Chapters 1–10). Volume II covers the period from the Renaissance and the Reformation to the contemporary age (Chapters 8–22), and incorporates the last three chapters in Volume I: “Transition to the Modern Age: Renaissance and Reformation,” “Political and Economic Transformation: National States, Overseas Expansion, Commercial Revolution,” and “Intellectual Transformation: The Scientific Revolution and the Age of Enlightenment.” Volume II also contains a comprehensive introduction that surveys the ancient world and the Middle Ages; the introduction is designed particularly for students who have not taken the first half of the course.

## Ancillaries

Learning and teaching ancillaries, including a *Study Guide*, *Instructor's Manual with Test Items*, *Computerized Test Items*, and *Map Transparencies*, also contribute to the text's usefulness. The *Study Guide* has been prepared by Professor Lyle E. Linville of Prince George's Community College. For each text chapter, the *Study Guide* contains an introduction, learning objectives, words to know, identifications, a map study exercise, chronological/relational exercises, multiple-choice and essay questions, and a “transition,” which reflects back on the chapter and looks forward to the next chapter's topic. The map study has outline maps, and students are asked to locate geographical features on them. A duplicate set of maps appears at the back of the book and may be removed for use in class quizzes. In the chronological/relational exercises, students are asked to put a list of items in their chronological order; then in an exercise that develops critical thinking skills, students are asked to write a paragraph

indicating the relationship of the items to one another, along with their historical significance.

The *Instructor's Manual with Test Items* was prepared for the brief edition by Professor Diane Moczar of Northern Virginia Community College. The *Manual* contains chapter outlines, learning objectives, lecture topics, a film/video bibliography, essay and discussion questions, identifications, and multiple-choice questions and answers. The test questions are also available on computer disk (for Macintosh, IBM and IBM-compatible computers). In addition, a set of map transparencies is available on adoption.

## Acknowledgments

In preparing this abridgment, I have made extensive use of the chapters written by my colleagues for *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics, and Society*. Chapter 8, "Transition to the Modern Age: Renaissance and Reformation," and Chapter 9, "Political and Economic Transformation: National States, Overseas Expansion, Commercial Revolution," are based largely on James R. Jacob's and Margaret C. Jacob's chapters in the longer volume. Several sections of Chapter 12, "The Industrial Revolution: The Transformation of Society," and of Chapter 16, "Europe in the Late Nineteenth Century: Modernization, Nationalism, Imperialism," are drawn from Myrna Chase's chapters. Chapter 19, "The Soviet Union: Modernization and Totalitarianism," and the concluding chapter, "The West in a Global Age," are, to a large extent, abridgments of Theodore H. Von Laue's chapters. To a lesser or greater extent, my colleagues' material has been abridged, restructured, and rewritten to meet the needs of this volume. Therefore, I alone am responsible for all interpretations and any errors. I wish to thank my colleagues for their gracious permission to use their words and thoughts.

I am also grateful to the staff of Houghton Mifflin Company who lent their considerable talents to the project. In particular I would like to thank Jeff Greene, developmental editor, and Helen Bronk, project editor, for their careful attention to detail, and Irmina Plaszkwicz-Pulc, whose copyediting skills are reflected in the manuscript. This edition rests substantially on the editorial talents of Freda Alexander, who worked closely with me on previous editions of the text. I am especially grateful to my friend George Bock who read the manuscript with an eye for organization, major concepts, and essential relationships. As ever, I am grateful to my wife Phyllis G. Perry for her encouragement.

M.P.



# Geography of Europe

The map on the following pages shows the continent of Europe and the countries around the Mediterranean Sea. It gives the names of countries and their capitals and indicates the physical features of the land, such as major rivers and other bodies of water, mountains, and changes in elevation. A knowledge of the geography of this area will help give a sense of the connection between geography and history: of how the characteristics of the terrain and the availability of rivers and other bodies of water affected the movement of people and the relationship between people and the environment throughout history.

Europe is the smallest continent in the world with the exception of Australia. The other continents are Africa, Asia, North America, South America, and Antarctica. The continent of Europe, which can be viewed as the western extension of the Asian landmass, is distinctive in its configuration. Peninsulas make up a significant portion of its land area. This feature gives Europe an unusually long coastline, equal in distance to one and a half times around the equator (37,877 miles). Europe's western boundary is the Atlantic Ocean; the Ural Mountains, Ural River, and Caspian Sea—in Russia and Kazakhstan—form its eastern boundary. The European continent extends southward to the Caucasus Mountains, the Black Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea, and northward to the Arctic Ocean. Off the mainland but considered by geographers to be part of Europe are thousands of islands, most notably the British Isles to the northwest.

The small size of the European continent often surprises North Americans. France, for example, covers less geographic area than Texas, and England is similar in size to Alabama. The distance from London to Paris is about the same as from New York to Boston; the distance from Berlin to Moscow is comparable to that from Chicago to Denver. And the entire continent of Europe is about the size of Canada.

**Major Peninsulas and Islands** There are five major European peninsulas: the Iberian (Portugal and Spain); the Apennine (Italy); the Balkan (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and parts of the former Yugoslavian republics and Turkey); the Scandinavian (Norway and Sweden); and Jutland (Denmark). Ireland and the United Kingdom of England, Wales, and Scotland make up the British Isles. Major islands of the Mediterranean Sea include the Balearic Islands, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, Crete, and Cyprus.

**Seas, Lakes, and Rivers** Europe's irregular coastline divides large areas of the surrounding waters into bays, gulfs, and seas. Located in the Mediterranean Sea are, from west to east, the Tyrrhenian Sea (bordered by Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica), the Adriatic Sea (between Italy and the former Yugoslavian republics), the Ionian Sea (between Italy and Greece), and the Aegean Sea (between Greece and Turkey).

The Baltic Sea, in the north, is bordered by Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, and Sweden. Narrow channels connect it to the North Sea, which lies between Great Britain and the countries of the northwestern mainland. The English Channel separates England and France, and the Bay of Biscay is bounded by the west coast of France and the north coast of Spain. The Black Sea, on the southern border of Russia and the Ukraine, is linked by water passages to the Aegean Sea. The Caspian Sea, which lies partly in Russia and Kazakhstan, and partly in Asia, is the world's largest saltwater lake. At ninety-two feet below sea level, it is also the lowest point in Europe.







Europe's many rivers have served as transportation routes for thousands of years. Several of the major rivers, including the longest, flow across the Russian plain. The Volga, Europe's longest river (2,194 miles), rises west of Moscow and empties into the Caspian Sea; canals and other river systems link it to the Arctic Ocean and the Baltic Sea. The Dnieper flows south through the agricultural heartland of the Ukraine into the Black Sea.

The second longest river, the Danube (1,777 miles), is the principal waterway in southeastern Europe. Originating in Germany, it flows through Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, the former Yugoslavian republics, Bulgaria, and Romania and into the Black Sea. The Rhine winds northward from the Alps, through western Germany and the Netherlands, to the North Sea, which is also the destination of the Elbe River in eastern Germany. In France, the Rhône flows south into the Mediterranean, and the Seine and Loire flow west to the English Channel and the Bay of Biscay. Other important waterways are the Po in northern Italy, the Vistula in Poland, and the Thames in England.

The proximity of most areas of the European landmass to the coastline or to major river systems is important to understanding the historical development of European civilization. Trading routes evolved and major cities grew along these waterways, and rivers have served as natural boundaries.

**Land Regions** Despite its small size, Europe presents a wide range of landforms, from rugged mountains to sweeping plains. These landforms can be separated into four major regions: the Northwest Mountains, the Great European Plain, the Central Uplands, and the Alpine Mountain System. The mountains of the northwest cover most of that region, running through northwestern France, Ireland, Scotland, Norway, Sweden, northern Finland, and the northwestern corner of Russia.

The Great European Plain spreads across almost the entire European part of the former Soviet Union, extending from the Arctic Ocean to the Caucasus Mountains. It stretches westward across Poland, Germany, Belgium, the western portion of France, and southeastern England.

The Central Uplands are a belt of high plateaus, hills, and low mountains. This belt reaches from the central plateau of Portugal, across Spain and the central highlands of France, to the hills and mountains of southern Germany, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

The Alpine Mountain System comprises several mountain chains. Within it lie the Pyrenees, between Spain and France; the Alps in southeastern France, northern Italy, Switzerland, and western Austria; and the Apennine range in Italy. Also included are the mountain ranges of the Balkan Peninsula, the Carpathian Mountains in Slovakia, Poland, and Romania, and the Caucasus Mountains between the Black and Caspian Seas. Throughout history, these mountain ranges have been formidable barriers and boundaries, affecting the movement of people and the relationship of people to each other and to the land.

When studying the map of Europe, it is important to notice the proximity of western regions of Asia—especially those at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea—to parts of North Africa. The cultures of these areas have not only interacted with those of Europe, but they have also played a significant role in shaping the history of Western civilization.

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